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Tomorrow Istook Will Lead Fight to Protect Social Security by Cutting Waste

WASHINGTON, D. C. -- The U.S. Congress votes tomorrow on cutting the size of the government by 1.4% across-the-board in order to balance the budget without raiding the Social Security trust fund. Congressman Ernest Istook (R-OK) will manage the landmark legislation.

Congress will vote to shave the budget, directing each agency to find and weed out waste, fraud and abuse. The reduction in discretionary programs will not reduce things like Social Security benefits or veterans' benefits, and federal workers will not have their pay cut, Istook says. Federal bureaucracies, will have to find savings within their own budgets, as the final step to balance the federal budget without using one penny of Social Security money.

The historic action will be part of the spending bill that Congressman Istook will present on the House floor for a vote tomorrow. Istook will be the floor manager of the legislation; he'll handle it in his role as a subcommittee chairman of the House Appropriations Committee.

"This is the showdown between those who always want to spend more, and those of us who do not. To keep the federal budget balanced, Congress has only three choices," Istook said. **"We could raid Social Security's trust fund, which has been done for decades, but that's wrong, and it's time to stop that. We could raise taxes, as President Clinton proposes, but that would also be wrong. Or we can reduce the size of government by 1.4%. To me and to most Americans, this is the right answer. It's really a no-brainer.**

President Clinton is talking about vetoing the bill, and the President is urging the Democrat Party to fight against the plan. Istook says that instead they should help the Republican effort to trim fat out of the government: **"A balanced budget, without raiding Social Security, is the new standard in Washington, and it's long overdue. It's time to stop spending Social Security money on other things. Cutting spending by just this little bit starts lowering the national debt, for the sake of our kids. It protects Social Security Trust Fund, for the sake of our seniors. And it reduces the size of government, for the sake of all of us."**

